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ABSTRACT

This book uses extensive interviews and statistical data to examine the failed desegregation efforts in Louisiana as a case study to illustrate how desegregation has followed the same unsuccessful pattern across the United States. It shows that the practical difficulty with desegregation is that academic environments are created by all the students in a school from the backgrounds that all the students bring with them. However, the disadvantages that minority children have to overcome affect schools more than schools can help remedy these disadvantages. After an introduction, "The Problem of Writing about Race," eight chapters discuss: (1) "Louisiana's Schools Prior to Desegregation: The Roots of a Racially Divided Society"; (2) "The Struggle to Desegregate the Schools: Overcoming Injustice through the Schools"; (3) "New Orleans: The Beginning and the End of a Process"; (4) "East Baton Rouge: School Desegregation and Unintended Consequences"; (5) "School Desegregation and White Flight in Lafayette Parish"; (6) "Louisiana and the Dilemma of Desegregation"; (7) "The Academic Consequences of Desegregation and Resegregation: Revisiting the Harm and Benefit Thesis"; and (8) "Recommendations" (policy recommendations in the areas of neighborhood schools, magnet schools, majority-to-minority programs, residential desegregation, economic development for minority communities, and reconstruction of family). Two appendices present single-parent families and the educational environment and a statistical examination of the harm and benefit thesis. (Contains 280 endnotes.) (SM)

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